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ABSTRACT

Some of the parallels in development between young children and young adolescents are explored, and ways in which approaches used in early childhood education can be applied to programs for young adolescents are suggested. In a comparison of the characteristics of the child and the adolescent, similarities are found in physical, intellectual, social, and emotional developmental stages. The complexity of adolescents' reactions to the adult world of the adolescents' world of individual fears and and expectations are described. In applying the early childhood perspective to educational programs for adolescents, consideration is given to the standard values currently held by junior high school teachers and administrators. These values are often unrealistic and irrelevant from the adolescent viewpoint. Characteristics desirable in teachers of adolescents are defined, and the importance of flexibility in both the school environment and the curriculum is pointed out. An annotated bibliography describes 20 books and journal articles, supplements the text, and gives further information about adolescents. (JD)

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Schools for Young Adolescents: Adapting the Early Childhood Model

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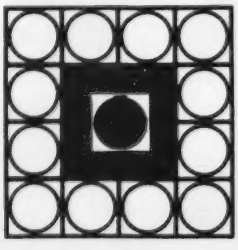

center for early adolescence

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Schools for Young Adolescents:

Adapting the Early Childhood Model

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Introduction

In the past two decades educators have become very attentive to the special characteristics of young children. They observe their development and, on the basis of these observations, make decisions about environments where young children learn or play. Observing early childhood development, educators also form judgments about the people who are best suited to work with young children. For instance, many early childhood educators would reject the "learn and play" dichotomy and insist that young children learn *while* playing, that play is a part of learning and vice versa.

This insistence often appears to be based only on ideology; it is also grounded in day-to-day interactions and research. Thus, on the basis of informal and vigorous observation, many early childhood educators conclude that an important characteristic of a teacher who works with young children is the enjoyment of flexible work/play programs. They also conclude that learning environments for young children must not only allow but also stimulate work and play.

Whatever the issue—teacher characteristics, curriculum, use of space, class size, the daily schedule—the early childhood movement has been insistent on starting with the child and molding learning environments to fit the child's developmental needs. The power of the movement is derived in part from educators' commitment to making their institutions responsive to children.

The same cannot be said about most schools for young adolescents. Historically, junior high schools have inherited their organizational structure and staff from senior high schools. Too often there is a serious lack of fit between the institutional structure and the needs of the young adolescents in attendance. Teachers and administrators are defeated daily by the inappropriateness of the school organization and by their inability—both because of lack of training and because of the demands of an ill-suited institution—to connect successfully with their students. They conclude, as

do many others, that it is cruel and unusual punishment to have to teach in a junior high school *because of the nature of young adolescents*. Given their day-to-day crushing experiences in a predetermined learning environment, it has been hard for them to recognize how many of their daily defeats are caused by the constraints of the institution and not the inherent nature of the students.

The breakdown has stemmed from a failure to follow a process parallel to that of early childhood educators: to start by observing the child and then to establish appropriate structures for learning.

This failure is not true of all schools for young adolescents. The middle-school movement represents an attempt to engage the attention of educators with the developmental tasks of early adolescence. "What is the nature of the young adolescent learner?" is the first and central question, similar to the developmental perspective of the early childhood movement.

Many of us who have taught in junior high schools have assumed that students do not want to learn, lack self-motivation, and need high levels of control if they are to master skills necessary for their well-being. Autonomy is perceived as dangerous. If we allow students a greater amount of control over space, time, choice of subjects, or peer interaction, we fear that we will be overwhelmed by chaos, and surely they will not learn.

While it is true that these assumptions are descriptive of some young adolescents, we have over-generalized their validity in many middle-grade schools. By doing so, we are working directly in opposition to important developmental tasks and designing school environments that are irrelevant and detrimental to the resolution of these tasks.

School settings for this age group need not only to allow some free rein for exploration, but also to focus energies and interests, harnessing them for mastery of essential skills. School settings that deaden energy and curiosity are anti-adolescent. It is not possible for a teacher to take a developmental perspective and also to hold all the reins in his or her hands.

We have, as Stephanie Feeney says, accepted certain developmental criteria for early childhood learning environments and teacher characteristics. The criteria are varied but there is broad consensus about what they are. The same should be true at the middle-grade level.

More varied and often contradictory external pressures are placed upon middle-grade schools than preschools. Do we therefore reject a developmental approach that illuminates our work so highly in other areas and continue our dim pursuit of ill-conceived goals with poorly understood students and seriously harassed teachers? The confusion about the goals and purposes of middle-grade schooling is epidemic in many communities, among educators, and among students who are at a stage in their lives when they are actively seeking definition. The confusion doesn't make sense, developmentally, for this age group which looks to adults for clarity.

It also doesn't make sense in terms of what we know about effective schools. Research tells us that high pupil outcomes, achievement, and behavior at the secondary level are strongly associated with consensus among school staff members about school values and norms. Students are more likely to accept school norms if they take some responsibility for running their school lives, if they perceive the school as a pleasant place in which to work, if there is an academic emphasis that assumes they will perform well, if teachers model the behavior and performance they expect of their students, if there is strong administrative leadership, if there is praise—and if the students are in learning environments where the assumptions and values are held consistently and communally.[1] We cannot afford the definitional confusion that pervades middle-grade schooling. The strongest consensus we have about intermediate schooling is that it should create a transition between elementary school and high school. However, defining a school in terms of what came before and what will follow denies that school its own integrity.

Clearly, it is harder to agree on what schools should be at the intermediate level than at the preschool level. The fact that we have failed to pursue consensus is strong testimony to the difficulties. We need to attend to the relationships between young adolescents at their stage of development and our lack of consensus about schooling for the age group. On the basis of what we know about school effectiveness and, even more importantly, the well-being of human beings in their environments, it is imperative that we become more responsive to the needs of young adolescents in our schools.

The Center for Early Adolescence, in cooperation with the Needmor Fund and state education agencies, state and

national advocacy groups, and national professional organizations, is developing an observation checklist based on current knowledge of the developmental needs of 10- to 15-year-olds and a review of existing effective school programs. Use of the checklist will increase informed dialogue about the developmental needs of the age group, thereby reducing the confusion and crisis mentality in middle-grade education and increasing the numbers of citizens who advocate for improvement of their schools for young adolescents.

The center also is working with the National Institute of Education to develop recommendations for designing a major study of effective schools for young adolescents. In developing these recommendations, a case study to identify and examine effective schools for young adolescents will be completed and a report will be published.

We have many lessons to learn. Some can be learned from schools for young children, where environments and the people in them are chosen carefully in relation to the nature of the age group. Young adolescents deserve no less.

Schools for Young Adolescents: Adapting the Early Childhood Model is one of a series of papers on 10- to 15-year-old youth as they develop in their families, their communities, and their schools. The series is edited by Leah Lefstein and Lita Kirschbrown.

The bibliography for this publication is the work of Eleanor McKinney and Marguerite Baechtold, of the American Library Association's Young Adult Services Division.

The Center is grateful to the Ford Foundation and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation for their financial support of this book.

Joan Scheff Lipsitz
Director

[1] Michael Rutter, et al., *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979).

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The Center for Early Adolescence sponsors workshops for professionals who want to exchange concerns and ideas stemming from their interactions with young adolescents. Center staff and consultants are also available to develop and deliver custom-tailored workshops and training for agencies and coalitions serving young people. These are some workshops the Center can co-sponsor with youth agencies and organizations:

Early Adolescence: A Shared Responsibility
The Time of Early Adolescence
Peer Counseling for Young Adolescents
Interaction in the Young Adolescent's Family
Sex Education Programs for Young Adolescents
Learning Environments
Learning Styles
Young Adolescents and the Arts
Adolescents with Special Learning Needs

Consultant Services

The Center for Early Adolescence staff welcomes requests for assistance in planning for the needs of young adolescents through program and staff development. The Center has a nationwide network of consultants on call, specialists in social services, education, medical and mental health services, recreation, juvenile justice, library science, and community development.

Common Focus

The Center's newsletter is published five times a year, offering information about youth policy, research, successful programs, new publications, workshops, and conferences.

Clearinghouse

The Center helps concerned professionals find necessary and reliable resources specifically related to the age group.

For additional information about the services of the Center for Early Adolescence, call or write:

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Schools for Young Adolescents:

Adapting the Early Childhood Model

Foreword

Several years ago I heard someone say that she had "worked her way up to early childhood education." The phrase appealed to me and I have used it to describe myself ever since. Early childhood educators smile knowingly in response and often nod agreement, because many of them have also come from other fields or from working with older children. In part, the statement refers to the importance of the early years of development, but it also indicates a strongly held belief about the uniqueness of early childhood education as a field. In early childhood education I find a basic humanitarianism expressed in a deep respect for the individual, an acknowledgment that children are not empty slates to be written upon. Early childhood educators respect individual differences; they try to help children grow in ways that are right for each individual. They look at children in terms of potential to be realized, rather than pathology to be corrected.

I certainly did not plan to become an early childhood educator. In part, I entered the field of education in response to my own unhappy school experiences. I felt that schools should be positive places where students could learn things that were important to them—places that helped them to become more aware of themselves and their environments and more accepting of others.

My original intention was to become a secondary social studies teacher, because that was an area in which I thought I could apply my interests in anthropology and psychology. My student teaching in world geography, in a junior high school in a wealthy suburb of Boston, was not a very gratifying experience. I was frustrated because my students were noisy, wiggly, and did not seem to care in the least about learning geography. I was also surprised that teachers and administrators seemed unconcerned with what I thought was important—the developmental needs of the young adolescent students and the relevance of the curriculum.

After graduating I was offered a job teaching United States history in a high school where students passed between classes silently and in single file, and where the principal was proud of the fact that all of the history teachers were on the same page of the textbook by Christmas. That was not for me! I soon gave up on secondary teaching and became a school social worker in an elementary school program for disadvantaged children. Although more comfortable in that setting, I still was concerned with the lack of interest in the children themselves and the rather narrow emphasis on "covering the curriculum" and "good behavior."

Several years later, I decided to enter a doctoral program in education to see if I could find more effective ways to make changes in schools. While I was waiting for the school year to begin, I took a temporary position as a research assistant to Professor Elizabeth (Betty) Brady, who taught courses in early childhood education and directed the excellent laboratory preschool on the campus of California State University at Northridge. What I learned from Betty and observed in that school came as a joy and a revelation to me. I found people who believed what I believed about education and who worked with children in the ways I had been seeking.

From Betty and the teachers in the lab school I learned about the "developmental" preschool, a kind of program that has its roots in a long tradition of humanistic education that goes back to Plato. The more recent tradition of nursery school education harks back to the first nursery schools in England (1912) and in the United States (1919). Developmental preschools were dedicated to the total development of the child—social, emotional, intellectual, and physical. The child was considered in the context of the life cycle, family, and society.

Today preschool teachers tend to draw on their own careful, naturalistic observations of children and on a number of different sources, including psychological, biological, and sociological theory. For psychodynamic theory, they turn to Freud and Erikson; for cognitive developmental theory, to Jean Piaget. They draw ideas about the nature of human potential from humanistic psychologists; from behaviorists, they discover how to describe mechanisms of learning.

I found in early childhood education a kind of philosophy that was consistent with my feelings about what is good for people. Since that first encounter almost fifteen years ago, I have continued to study and work in the field. For the last several years I have been responsible for designing and teaching courses in early childhood education at the University of Hawaii. I have found through trial and error that the developmental approach can be effectively adapted to working with college students. In fact, my experience in teacher education has convinced me that we must understand the developmental characteristics of any age group in order to teach and work with that group effectively, for each stage of life has its own important developmental tasks to be accomplished in preparation for subsequent stages.

When I first met Joan Lipsitz, director of the Center for Early Adolescence, we explored some of the similarities between young children and young adolescents. On learning the developmental characteristics of young adolescents, I thought, "I wish I'd known that when I was teaching in a junior high!" If the developmental approach works in preschools and college settings, it also has powerful implications for working with young adolescents, who have many developmental similarities to young children.

This paper grows out of my dialogue with Joan Lipsitz and from the ideas and support of Dr. Terry Saario, formerly of the Ford Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education. In the paper I will explore some of the parallels in development between young children and young adolescents. I will also suggest ways in which approaches used in programs for young children can be applied to programs for young adolescents.

Early Childhood and Early Adolescence—Characteristics and Comparisons

Adolescence has been greatly dramatized in our culture—portrayed as a tempestuous time that is difficult to understand and painful both for the young people themselves and for their parents and teachers. Yet adolescence is not so mystifying when we consider this period of life in relationship to the life cycle. There are many continuities in development between childhood and adolescence, as well as new developmental tasks that begin at this time.

In many ways, young adolescents are similar to preschool children. They are growing very rapidly, and their bodies are restless. Their intellectual development is making possible new areas for exploration, questioning, and competence. Their emotional development helps them to leave the security of the family and intermittently engage in new social relationships outside the home. Their growing physical, intellectual, and social powers enable them to strive for new arenas of personal autonomy. They are in a stage marked by rapid change, which brings with it ambivalence, unpredictable behavior, and large measures of energy. Because human development is continuous, there are many similarities from one stage to the next. However, early childhood and early adolescence give rise to so much rapid growth and change that adults often experience them as being discontinuous, unfamiliar, even disruptive.

Researchers have pointed out strong developmental similarities between young children and young adolescents. Some propose that early adolescence be regarded as a separate developmental stage from later adolescence.

> There are two periods in human life characterized by rapid and extensive changes along multiple developmental structures. One period is the first three years of life and the other is a span of time that falls typically

between the ages of 10 and 15 years. The second period is distinguished by the complexity of interpersonal changes and the extent of diversity between individuals. The many areas of developmental changes that occur during early adolescence make it a unique and identifiable age group.[1]

Despite the developmental parallels, our adult reactions to young adolescents are often less generous and productive than our reactions to preschoolers. It is easier for most adults to respond positively to the growth strivings of young children than to accept behavior that may have similar meaning in the young adolescent. Young adolescents are not just growing taller; their physical changes imply a precocious sexuality that makes adults uncomfortable. A preschooler is relatively unaware of physical growth, except for an understandable pride in becoming "a big person." A young adolescent is often painfully self-conscious and critical even about minute blemishes. The heightened emotionality and self-consciousness demand a degree of understanding that adults may not be ready to offer. Unlike preschoolers, young adolescents' new intellectual powers enable them to question social values, resulting in a challenge that may be very unsettling to adults.

In the overview of developmental tasks that follows, I have tried to point to some of the continuities and discontinuities between early childhood and early adolescence in the context of the individual's progress from childhood to adulthood. Despite the fact that they are discussed separately, physical, intellectual, and socio-emotional development in early adolescence are intricately interwoven and are characterized by great variability. Thus, young people not only differ from one another in the ages at which they enter puberty and the rapid growth spurt; they also experience variability within themselves, since physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive developmental changes do not necessarily occur congruently.

Physical Development

The child's stature increases rapidly during the first three years and again, most rapidly, at puberty. While younger children tend to view their growth with pride or a lack of awareness, pubescent youth are keenly aware and self-conscious of the physiological changes that are occurring: uneven growth spurts; increases in weight and height; the

development of secondary sex characteristics; increases in musculature, strength, and stamina in boys; and the onset of menstruation in girls.

Early adolescence is a time of biological instability and heightened emotionality. There is a tendency toward awkwardness, lack of coordination, and discomfort with the body. The young adolescent is forced by these biological changes "to come to terms with new drives, urges, and physical capacities, some of which are hard to control."[2]

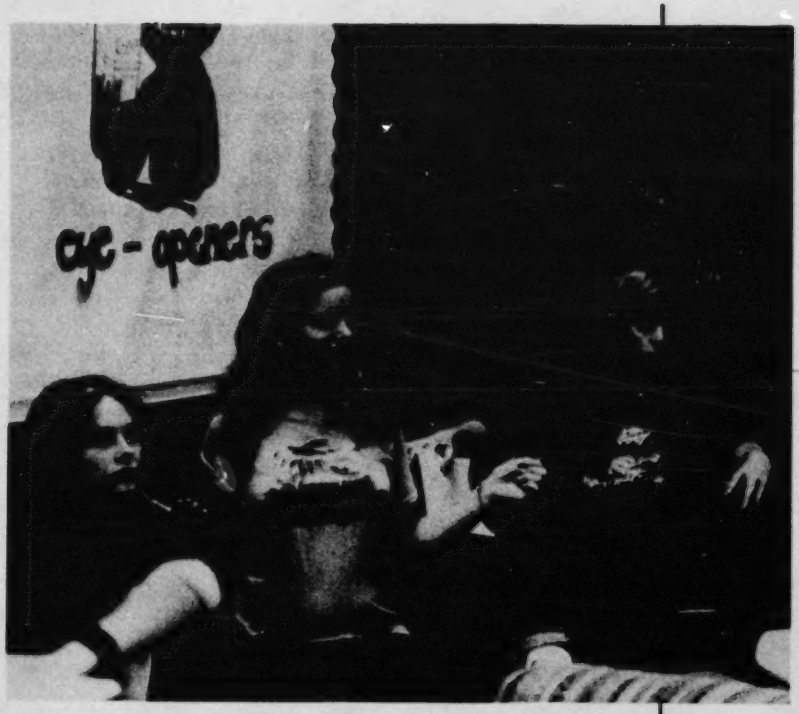
The years roughly between ages 10 and 15 are also characterized by enormous physical variation between individuals of the same chronological age. The young adolescent must deal with the psychological implications of this diversity in size and sexual development. It can be a source of real distress—especially to the person who matures late. The anguish of this period is beautifully summed up by a friend who remembers one of the more developed girls in her seventh-grade class appraising her contemptuously and saying, "I'll listen to you when you take off your undershirt."

Important developmental tasks of adolescence build and refine physical skills and develop a sense of acceptance and comfort with the new signs of sexual capacity in a maturing body.

Intellectual Development

In early childhood youngsters develop new cognitive competence. According to Piaget, they move from the sensory-motor stage, in which they learn from direct physical manipulation of the world outside themselves, to the preoperational stage, when they begin to perform internal mental activities, such as thinking of things they cannot see, imagining, or imitating others. Similarly, development of additional cognitive competence enables the young adolescent to think and respond in new ways. The movement is toward a greater capacity for abstract thought, which, among other things, allows the adolescent to see himself or herself as an object to be observed.

In Piaget's terms the young adolescent moves from a period of concrete operational thought, characteristic of children between ages seven and eleven, to a period of formal operational thought, which tends to begin at about age eleven. During the period of concrete operations, the child



Adolescents need to get up, move about, show off, be together, or be alone. Sandra Dalkin, Kandy Cox, and Craig Woods enjoy a moment together—but alone—in a comfortable corner of their classroom at Western Alamance Middle School, North Carolina.

is learning to apply logical thought to concrete problems. Formal operational thought is characterized by the ability to apply logic to hypothetical problems, to weigh a situation mentally and deduce relationships without having to try it out, to deal with premises, and to understand that an experience often depends on events that are not immediately observable.

There is great variation in the age at which people enter the stage of formal operations. Recent studies have indicated that many adolescents never reach full mastery of this stage of mature thought. Moreover, young adolescents are not

fully in control or comfortable with their new mental powers and are sometimes erratic with their thinking. Elkind describes as "pseudostupidity" the swings from adult to childish logic that can be so frustrating to the adult who tries to reason with the young adolescent.[3]

Changes in intellectual competence are tied to changes in social competence. The young adolescent moves from the egocentrism of childhood to a somewhat different kind of egocentrism in adolescence. Adolescents are better able to understand the viewpoints of others, but they tend to be extremely self-preoccupied, thinking "There is no other object of interest in the world but me. Everyone is watching me."

Another development made possible by the new intellectual abilities of early adolescence is the examination of previously unquestioned values and beliefs to determine their logic and consistency. This leads first to discomfort, then to questioning of old beliefs and a search for new ones. Given the age group's tendency toward intense feeling, new beliefs tend to be held passionately and dogmatically. Thus, we find young people either questioning religious beliefs or becoming more devout at this period. Similarly, they may (and often do) challenge parents or teachers to explain and clarify what would previously have been accepted without question.

Social and Emotional Development

Erik Erikson's conceptual framework serves to show some of the continuities from childhood to adolescence, as well as important new directions of adolescence in the formation of adult identity. Erikson describes developmental issues that must be resolved at each stage of the life cycle:

Development of Basic Trust—During infancy the child learns or fails to learn that other people can be depended upon and that the child can depend on himself or herself to elicit nurturing responses from others. Through the love and acceptance they receive, young children learn that the world is a good and safe place. Basic trust is still an issue in adolescence; however, during this period individuals move from trust in parents, teachers, and other adults to trust in peers and ultimately to trust in self. This is a time of shifting ground as relationships are redefined in response to a desire for greater independence and self-reliance. This movement

toward a developing sense of trust in peers is unsettling to some adults, who, rather than viewing the peer group as a positive force in the development of young adolescents, fear—usually incorrectly—that the peer group will undo and negate the influence of parents, teachers, and other important adults.

Development of Autonomy—According to Erikson the quest for the development of autonomy over shame and doubt is the major developmental task of toddlers. During this time children learn to control their bodies, to assert themselves, and to attempt to define themselves as persons capable of self-control and independent action.

Autonomy comes up again as a crucial issue for the young adolescent as the transition from childhood to adulthood begins. It involves a movement away from family to greater reliance on peers in preparation for greater reliance on self. Like the young child, the young adolescent wants to be independent but finds the prospect somewhat frightening. Like the young child, the adolescent striving for independence may experience ambivalence and frequent regression. One mother quotes her 11-year-old daughter's response to a parental suggestion: "Your choices are dumb, and mine are scary."

Young adolescents strive for autonomy in various areas of their lives. At home, curfews, mode of dress, hair style, decibel levels of music, and other areas of behavior become the battlegrounds on which skirmishes for a broadened scope of autonomy are won and lost. These are issues requiring negotiation if young adolescents are to develop a healthy capacity to function on their own in the future. For six to seven hours a day, five days a week, the same students testing the limits of authority and autonomy at home are attending schools that often require absolute conformance to rules and standards set by adults. The behavior problems that ensue, often blamed on the nature of the young adolescent, instead may be caused by the rigidity of a school that seeks to contain rather than foster autonomous development. Based on the characteristics of healthy adolescent development, those who create school environments must not allow autonomy without limits; neither, however, should they insist upon such heavy doses of conformity that the budding sense of autonomy cannot thrive.

Development of Industry and Initiative—Industry is the final developmental task of childhood. During the preschool

years, children need opportunities to express their interest in the world by actively exploring and exercising their curiosity and creativity. At this time they begin to learn skills needed to work in society. Similarly, young adolescents need opportunities to take creative initiative and to act upon their environments in ways that are interesting and meaningful to them in order to establish control over themselves and their surroundings. They need opportunities to achieve physical and intellectual mastery. They need to develop a sense of themselves as successful people, people who can "get the job done." Those who do not accomplish these developmental tasks are burdened instead with a feeling of inferiority, a sense of inability to master physical and intellectual tasks.

Young adolescents who have new physical and mental powers need more opportunities to practice old skills and develop new ones that will lead to eventual adult competence. The lack of interest and discouragement that many young adolescents feel about school may be related to a lack of confidence in their abilities and a lack of opportunities to test their newly developed skills.

Development of Identity—The development of an adult sense of identity has its precursors in the earlier tasks of childhood. If childhood experiences have been characterized by success, children can enter adolescence feeling comfortable with who they are and what they are becoming.

According to Erikson, the development of a sense of identity, as opposed to a sense of role confusion, is a major task of adolescence. The events of this period determine a great deal of future adult development in vocational and social roles.

The world of young adolescents expands rapidly. They are allowed increasing physical mobility; social groups form, dissolve, and form again; intellectual growth leads to broader areas of interest; political and economic events become more personally meaningful; the future becomes something to be reckoned with. They begin to have a past.

Focusing on the development of identity becomes possible in adolescence because of the new self-awareness that grows out of changes in cognition. Although early adolescents are often characterized as relatively uncreative, they are certainly intensely curious. Able for the first time to conceptualize a past, a future, a present generation, a social

order, the meanings of myriads of metaphors, theorems, principles and other abstractions that they were previously unaware of, many young adolescents are energetic in their curiosity. Some are doers, some are contemplative, some flighty, some overwhelmed. Those who have formal operational cognitive capabilities can stand outside themselves, observe, and judge.

Development of Intimacy—The development of a capacity for intimacy rather than isolation is the major task of the young adult. We have seen the precursors of adolescent developmental tasks in early childhood. In early adolescence the foundation for the development of intimacy is grounded. During adolescence, the young person must know adults who can be trusted and must feel some self-satisfaction, in order to learn later to care for another person. Relationships with peers, special chums, and adults, and the accompanying interpersonal skills acquired, will lay a foundation for later intimate relationships.

The complex nature of the development of intimacy and the importance of firm foundations in pre-adult developmental stages are suggested by Judith E. Gallatin:

> In Erikson's view, a successful young adult must be able to express warmth and affection for others, and he must be able to distinguish his friends from his enemies, but he must also feel sufficiently secure about himself to endure—and even enjoy—being by himself. The two major preoccupations of adulthood, love and work, require a balance between these two opposing trends.[4]

Summary

When we look at the interaction of all these developmental streams, it appears that the major developmental task of early adolescence is to build the foundation for a strong and realistic concept of self. "Who am I as a person?" —a question first raised in early childhood—must be confronted again in early adolescence in response to the impact of rapid biological and psychological changes. When development in early adolescence proceeds in positive ways, we see a movement in all areas—social, emotional, intellectual, and physical—toward increased independence, competence, and greater responsibility to self and society.

Applying the Early Childhood Perspective to Educational Programs for Young Adolescents

Early childhood educational programs focus on the development of the whole child. They are based on knowledge of developmental stages and developmental tasks. In planning daily activities teachers combine knowledge about the general characteristics of the age group with careful observation of individual children in the group.

Early adolescence has just been described as a period of rapid growth and change that thrusts many new conflicts and issues upon the individual. If we were to apply the developmental emphasis to the design of programs for young adolescents, they would probably be quite different from the traditional junior high schools that most young adolescents attend today.

Values

A concern with development is an acknowledgment that people change and grow as they move through life. This process may be supported or hindered by the quality of the individual's encounters and experiences. Developmental concern also implies that the purpose of an educational system is to support young people as they move from the dependency of childhood to the responsibilities of adulthood, rather than focusing only on the acquisition of a predetermined body of knowledge.

Educators must examine their goals and values regarding what is most important for their students. In my teacher education classes I often use this excerpt from the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland* to illustrate the point: "'Would you tell me, please, which way to go from here?' asked Alice. 'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the cat." Educators who value the developmental approach

in working with young adolescents will assess school relationships, structure, and content to determine whether they are fostering healthy growth.

Doris Christensen and I have designed a set of continua we call the Dimensions of Educational Structure (Figure 1), which we have used to help teachers examine "where they want to get to." In looking at their values and beliefs, teachers can determine to what extent their actual practice in the classroom is consistent with their philosophies.

As the chart demonstrates, we see education on a continuum that ranges from content-centered to process-centered, depending on the assumptions, values, and practices present in the teaching environment. In the process-centered classroom, as is common in early childhood education, children are viewed as growth-seeking and motivated from within. Because the teacher believes in nurturing the child's individual strengths, autonomy is encouraged. Reflecting these values, the teacher's approach to the child is based on the child's interests and needs. The learner has some freedom of rein not only in the choice of tasks, but also in when, where, and how they are to be accomplished. Life experiences are valued and used as a base on which to build further learning. The classroom—with its corners where the child can work alone or in groups, with movable furniture and varied interest centers—reflects these values.

Much of today's education for young adolescents is more content-centered than process-centered. In contrast to the classroom in which the young child is encouraged to grow and develop autonomously, the young adolescent faces classes in which the curriculum is predetermined and prepackaged without regard to the students' needs, interests, or prior experience. Desks, chairs, tables, and other furnishings are set in a fashion predetermined by the teacher or custodian—if not bolted to the floor, then obviously not intended for rearrangement. Often assignments are made without regard to the varied cognitive abilities of the students: are some of them capable of the logic and hypothesis-testing that is characteristic of formal operational thinking, while others must be given more concrete tasks? As they begin to test themselves in new individual and interpersonal roles, what are their interests? What will make them respond with excitement to learning? Can the set of questions at the end of the chapter be the key to knowledge for the child in the third row who is daydreaming about horses,

Figure 1. Dimensions of Educational Structure

PROCESS-CENTERED EDUCATION	CONTENT-CENTERED EDUCATION
Assumptions and Values	
People as growth-seeking	People as shaped by the environment
Motivation to learn comes from within the person	Motivation to learn based on rewards
Development of the whole person	Development of understanding and skills
Autonomy	Conformity
The Teaching Process	
Based on needs and interests of learner	Predetermined curriculum
Use of experience	Use of packaged curriculum
Learner-initiated	Teacher-initiated
Process-oriented	Task- or product-oriented
Learner-chosen use of time	Teacher-chosen use of time
Learner-chosen use of space	Teacher-chosen use of space
Learner-chosen use of equipment	Teacher-chosen use of equipment

From: Feeney and Christensen. 1979, p. 38
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as well as to the one who is happiest when tinkering with motors and machinery? What of the children who feel too gangly or too diminutive, too restless or too tired, too buxom or too flat?

Teachers and others who work with young adolescents might find it helpful to use Figure 1 as a guide in examining their values, the relationships between these values and actual practices, and the implications of values and practices for the developmental needs of their students.

Teacher Characteristics

Early childhood educators believe that meaningful learning takes place in a setting where developmental characteristics of the age group are understood, where basic trust has been established, and where children feel free to explore, to experiment, and to make mistakes. The personal qualities of the teacher are essential, for the teacher creates the setting in which children can direct their own growth and learning within the context of supportive, nurturing, and respectful relationships.

Adults who work with the young adolescent age group would do well to have some of the same characteristics possessed by good teachers of young children. The variability of young adolescent students can make them a difficult age group to teach, but knowledge of their developmental characteristics could help middle-grade teachers respond as rationally to their students' behavior and idiosyncracies as early childhood educators respond to theirs.

Because early adolescence is a time of transition, it is often characterized by restlessness, ambivalence, and rebelliousness. The student who leans on the teacher one day may be striving for independence the next. Teachers who enjoy working with the age group remember well and have mastered the developmental tasks of their own teenage years. Able to recall their youthful vulnerability, they understand and respect their students' sensitivity to criticism, desire for group acceptance, and feelings of being acutely conspicuous. Such teachers, who are secure in their adult identity and comfortable with their sexuality, are capable of supporting children's good feelings about themselves. Possessing clear values, these teachers are aware of the necessity of using power and authority wisely and are sensitive to their own feelings as well as the feelings of their students.

Young adolescents respond best to adults who exercise natural authority—based on greater age, experience, and wisdom—rather than arbitrary authority or abdication of authority by adults who try to be "just pals." Young people need adults who are trustworthy, who are fair and consistent, who set reasonable limits, and who realize that adolescents need to have someone to push against while testing those limits. Teachers who know themselves and who understand adolescence can help teenagers learn about themselves and learn to cope with their feelings, their peers, and their families.

The Learning Environment

In early childhood education we see the environment as an important vehicle for children's development of autonomy, communication skills, creativity, and problem-solving. The environment also communicates to children how we feel about them. They sense that we care when we take time to design places for them that are attractive, functional, and responsive to their interests and needs. We believe that children are natural investigators who do not need to be pressured to learn. At this stage of development they need environments rich in sensory experiences, choices, interactions with their peers, and guidance from adults. One of the most important roles of the adult in such a setting is the careful planning of the learning environment.

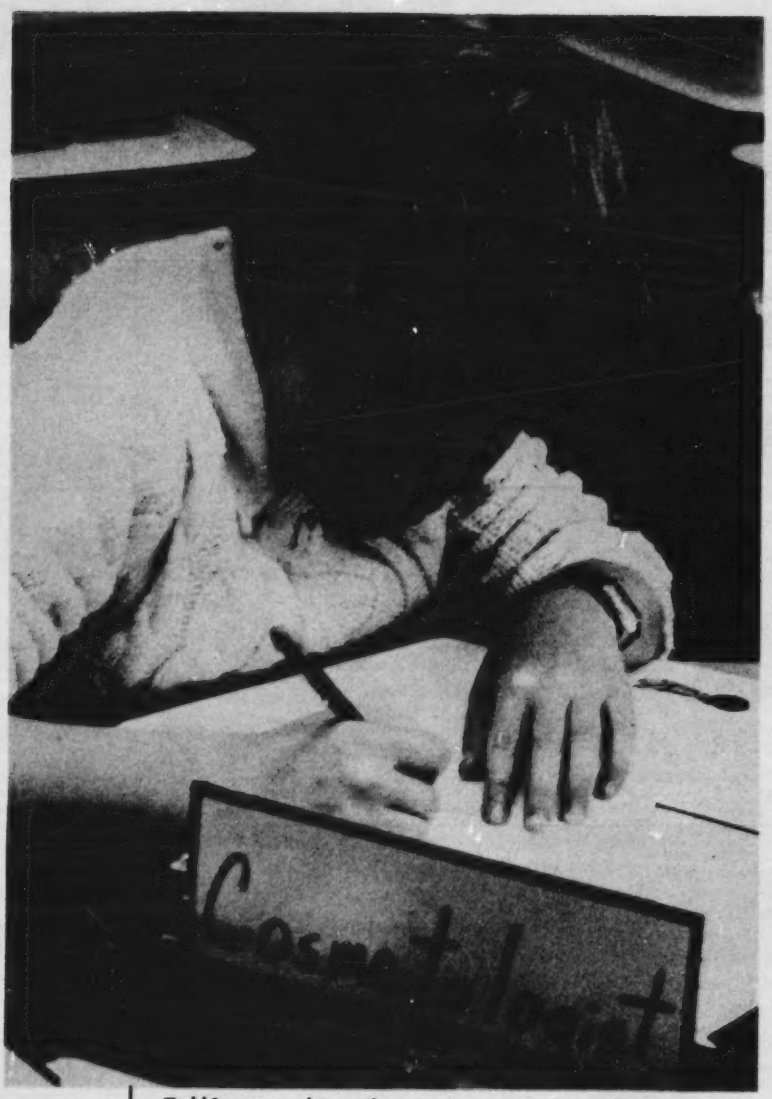
Young adolescents, too, are sensitive to their environment. They decorate their bedrooms with posters of heroes and heroines and spend hours adorning themselves for public view. This age group is not less in need of opportunities to make choices affecting their environment than the preschoolers and is certainly as much or more in need of feedback from peers and guidance from adults. Involving individual students, classes, and extracurricular student groups in decorating school walls and corridors gives students a stake in their environment and an opportunity for peer and adult approval. Immaculate, bare walls may make life easier for schools' maintenance crews, but they do not meet young adolescents' needs to have an impact on their surroundings. Walls covered with student work come alive with the rapidly individualizing personalities and experiences of the students who are developing within them.

The typical preschool class consists of a number of interest centers where materials are provided on low tables and

shelves that allow children to take out and put away their own materials and to work independently or in small groups. This arrangement allows children to make choices, providing for a range of individual differences in interest, learning styles, and readiness. In the preschool we organize time and space in response to what we know about the physical needs of young children who are active, wiggly, and greatly varied in attention span. Children at work in the preschool can sit at tables or on the floor in any position that is comfortable. There is always time for vigorous outdoor activity. Some preschools even assume that children know when they need active play and let them choose whether they wish to be indoors or outdoors.

Similarly, young adolescents are in a period of rapid growth and change. They need to move their bodies, to explore, and to experiment with their physical and social worlds. Some schools for young adolescents provide opportunities for experimentation in science labs and for healthful exercise in physical education classes. Not always, however, is there provision for variations based on students' abilities and interests. Classes are often structured into time blocks of less than one hour. Such rigid scheduling is not responsive to students' individually different needs for physical activity, but it does at least guarantee an opportunity for movement every hour.

Just as we design learning environments for preschoolers with their developmental variability in mind, so can we respond to the greater range of individual differences in early adolescence. School settings for the 10- to 15-year-old should be designed to allow for mobility, for development of responsibility and independence, for meaningful interactions with materials and tasks, for socialization, and for solitude. Many schools today are using learning centers for individualized study to allow for differences in cognitive ability. Classes are divided into smaller working groups to give students an opportunity for more peer interaction. (Some resources that might be useful in analyzing existing physical settings and designing changes are Robert Sommer's *Tight Spaces*, which deals with softening hard environments, and Elizabeth Jones' *Dimensions of Teaching-Learning Environments*, which provides a framework for looking at learning environments in terms of the physical mobility allowed, the sensory variations provided, the amount of privacy permitted, the variety and kinds of activities available, and the amount of learner choice offered.)



Todd Jones is working with materials on cosmetology in the career development center at Western Alamance Middle School in North Carolina. Students spend time each day in career investigation and other exploratory activities. Career centers are just one example of ways in which personal interests can be combined with social needs in a flexible environment. Adolescents need activities that will allow them to work alone or in groups, giving them opportunities to enjoy their privacy or enjoy their friends.

Most young adolescents have had little experience with a learning environment that offers flexible scheduling and a range of options in activities. They need help in developing skills that would enable them to make wise choices and to use time responsibly. Young adolescents should not be turned loose with more freedom of choice than they can reasonably handle, but they could gain valuable preparation for adult decision-making if they were allowed to learn to choose for themselves in a carefully structured setting that provided necessary limits and support for their development.

Program Content

In early childhood programs we begin with the assumption that children are interesting people, worth learning about and learning from. We also place great trust in intrinsic motivation, believing that stimulation should be inherent in the activity itself. In contrast, we minimize extrinsic rewards like gold stars and grades, providing instead a rich environment that challenges children to learn. Educators designing developmental programs for young adolescents should also incorporate intrinsic motivation into curricular and extra-curricular activities, matching learners' tasks to their needs and interests. Educational programs that focus on young adolescents' developmental needs, their lives and daily problems, could have the same intrinsic motivational stimulus for young adolescents that building blocks and play corners have for the preschool set. In addition, such programs could reduce the need for extrinsic rewards while helping students cope with adolescence and preparing them to deal with the choices and responsibilities of young adulthood.

In the intellectual arena developmentally based schooling for young adolescents would support the movement from concrete operations to formal operational thinking, stimulating creative thought, inquiry, and problem solving Though many young adolescents are able to think abstractly, not all have achieved formal operations. Thus, not all students in schools for the age group are able to apply logic to learning situations purely by employing mental deduction. Unfortunately, most curricula for the age group are based on the assumption that all students have acquired the formal operational level of mental maturity and can therefore be instructed most of the time through reading textbooks and responding to abstract questions and problems.

Not all adolescents (or all adults, for that matter) learn best from books. Many young people, even those with formal operational skills, have neither sufficient intellectual development nor enough experiences in the real world to make the content of books meaningful.

Young adolescents need more experiential learning, greater emphasis on the relevance of the curriculum to their own lives and interests, and more stimulation of inquiry, problem solving, and creative expression. In order that they may test their skills and learn more about themselves and their career interests, young adolescents need direct experience in settings outside the school. Schools can design programs to support them in exploring and participating in their communities. In a time of shrinking community resources, young adolescents can offer welcome services to old people, to day-care centers (one of my favorite schools has sixth graders read daily to the preschoolers), and to government. Some schools have established service-learning projects in which students work within their communities. The youthful workers can meet their need to develop a sense of responsibility and have a positive impact on the world outside school and family. Such participation in their communities helps to channel adolescents' enthusiasm and exuberance into valuable learning and experience.

The number of students who are graduating from high school as functional illiterates illustrates that many have not acquired basic skills. Making the learning environment and the community environment more responsive to students' needs should enhance the skill-building effort.

In her book, *The Therapeutic Classroom* (1974), Monica Holmes describes a special program for difficult and disruptive students in a junior high school in Spanish Harlem. Holmes and her colleagues found that much of the students' negative and disruptive behavior was related to their attempts to save face while covering up their deficiencies in basic skills, usually reading. Holmes' work demonstrates how important it is that every student have the opportunity to be diagnosed individually for learning deficiencies, to master basic skills, and to learn in a setting that fosters self-esteem.

Schools for young adolescents should also include in their goals helping students to cope with their feelings and their real-life concerns.

> School should be a place where a growing child can test and expand his range of emotional and intellectual

Stephanie Feeney

Learning how to read and follow directions was the reason students made popcorn balls for a Halloween party at Western Alamance Middle School in North Carolina. Doretha Collins is shown putting the final touches on her ball. The popcorn ball activity encouraged students to use many skills in one task—reading, following directions, cooking, measuring, and social interaction—just as they would in their daily lives.

> potentials. . . . It certainly is true that helping students to know is a major task of schools. But so, too, should helping students to feel their anger, their joys, their hurts, or whatever, when these emotions occur.[5]

Whether in regularly scheduled classes or in informal groups with skilled adult leaders, students should be able to discuss their problems, concerns, and feelings. In such sessions students could get reliable information and could have time to explore and clarify their feelings, relationships, and values. In short, students need time to deal with the real issues of adolescence, including the important question, "Who am I?"

A school designed to support the total development of the young adolescent also provides for optimal physical development, including opportunities for every student to develop strength, stamina, coordination, and flexibility. Enough choices should be offered, so that every student can find success in physical activity. Activities might include the standard sports *plus* jogging, dance, creative movement, martial arts, yoga, and even bike-riding, if that is what the students like to do. The competition of team sports, requiring winners and losers, should be deemphasized, particularly because of the physical disparity characteristic of the age group. In place of competition should come noncompetitive activities, such as those described in *The New Games Book* by Andrew Fluegelman, to encourage students to work together by fostering a sense of friendship and cooperation.

Two final thoughts about the application of early childhood practices to schools for young adolescents. First, we in early childhood education recognize the importance of good nutrition for the rapidly growing preschooler. In programs for low-income children, such as Head Start, nutrition is a major part of the daily routine, both in activities that involve cooking in the classroom and in the provision of carefully planned snacks and lunches for the children. Even more rapid increases in height and weight occur during the adolescent growth spurt than in early childhood. Adolescence is also a critical period for the development and functioning of the hormone system. During this period, there is greater need for energy to support growth than at any other time in the life cycle. Young adolescents tend to get energy by consuming excessive amounts of sugar, rather than by eating a balanced diet with enough protein to support healthy growth. Schools for young adolescents can help improve

their eating practices by teaching them concepts of nutrition, skills in preparing appetizing, nutritious foods, and by paying attention to the quality of food served in lunchrooms.

Finally, in early childhood education we regard parents as an integral part of the program. We communicate regularly with parents regarding their children's progress. We offer them opportunities to participate in the classroom, and we often provide parent-education programs. In other words, we try to help parents understand their children's progress so that they can best facilitate healthy development at home.

More home-school coordination can also be helpful where young adolescents are concerned. Worried and bewildered parents of teenagers often want or need help in understanding their children's behavior. Schools can improve communication with parents through regular newsletters, parent/teacher conferences (not only when something is wrong), and classes or groups to help parents understand and deal with their adolescents. Parents and teachers should have an opportunity to share information not only about the child's achievements in class, but also about the physical, social, and emotional questions that arise. Ideally parents' communication with the school would result in greater participation in their children's education, as well as greater respect and understanding for what the school is trying to achieve and increased commitment to volunteer programs.

Conclusion

Skeptics will say that it is easier to apply developmental educational concepts to work with young children than with young adolescents: preschoolers are less developed and more malleable; adults can control a good deal of the daily influences on their lives. Life for the young adolescent is more stressful; peer group influences are greater; pressures to experiment with drugs, liquor, and sex are ever present; and violence in schools is rampant. The effects of the media are powerful, too.

Without question, the skeptics are right: preschoolers *are* more malleable than young adolescents. We cannot control the young adolescent's environment as carefully as we can that of the younger child. Since it is so obviously true that young adolescents must learn to deal with contemporary pressures that include drugs, sex, and violence, is it appropriate to provide schools for adolescents that ignore their need to learn to cope? Is it not all the more important to make our schools for young adolescents places that help them grow and flourish? We want our young adolescents to become thoughtful, caring and self-sufficient human beings who are able to think creatively and make wise choices. We can and should give them institutions where they can develop these skills.

Many adults are confused and threatened by the behavior of young adolescents, and few are really fond of them. We have spent years in educating parents and teachers to understand and nurture preschool children, knowing that understanding these children developmentally helps to foster affection, concern, and appropriate adult responses to them. Is it not possible that the adult reaction of confusion and fear toward adolescents grows out of a similar need for education about the age group? Would not an understanding of adolescents' developmental needs breed the affection and guidance from adults that they crave?

Young people are growing up in difficult times; they need all the help, support, and affection they can get from the people whose job it is to work with them. The professional

people who work in schools are in a unique position to understand them, to be their advocates, and to help them grow into the best kind of people they can be.

New directions would entail many changes—in the preparation and selection of teachers and administrators, in educational goals, in teacher roles and behavior, and in the daily activities and schedules of schools. It is a major challenge and one that is well worth taking.

Notes

[1]Paul DeHart Hurd, panel leader, "Final Report of the National Science Foundation Early Adolescence Panel Meeting April 30, May 1, 2, 3, 1978," in *Early Adolescence: Perspectives and Recommendations* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 3.

[2]James W. Maddock, "Sex in Adolescence: Its Meaning and Its Future," *Adolescence*, 8, No. 31 (1973), p. 328.

[3]David Elkind, *The Child and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 92.

[4]Judith E. Gallatin, *Adolescence and Individuality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 188.

[5]Don Hamachek, *Behavior Dynamics in Teaching, Learning and Growth* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1975), p. 82.

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An Annotated Bibliography

by Eleanor R. McKinney and Marguerite Baechtold

This selective bibliography will guide readers of the Feeney paper to additional sources about the mind, body, and emotions of children and young adolescents. Items have been chosen for inclusion on the basis of the interpretive value to practicing professionals who seek further enlightenment on adolescent characteristics and the implications and applications one can draw from what is known about early childhood development. The annotated titles that follow reflect a balance between theoretical and popular/professional literature. A sampling of textual publications will satisfy a need for a broad overview. Not intended to be an exhaustive search, the bibliography has as its purpose to encourage further professional reading and to reinforce the premises of the foregoing article.

Adams, Gerald R. "Personal Identity Formation: A Synthesis of Cognitive and Ego Psychology," *Adolescence*, 12, No. 46 (1976), 151-164.

This author compares the developmental stages in egocentrism in the child to those in the adolescent. He discusses personal identity: self-image, values, attitudes, and thoughts, as separate from social identity. The child lacks ability to recognize personal identity, but as the developmental stages progress, the ego matures from the infantile single viewpoint to the understanding that people have different ideas and thoughts based on the ego mechanism.

Young adolescents at first have trouble, like younger children, in separating their concerns from the feelings and concerns of others, until they mature in formal operational thought to recognize that parents and other adults are fallible, can neither protect them nor think for them. The young adolescent searches for his or her own choices and realizes independence through choosing, recognizing that other

people do the same. The author identifies the crises in a person's growth periods; the identity crisis highlighting the adolescent years is related to the infant's identity formation. The search for intimacy identified by Erikson compares to the ego-identity of the child who moves from basic trust, love, and security to the need for self-identity. The article includes a table illustrating the comparisons between egocentrism at infancy and at adolescence.

Association for Childhood Education International. *Early Adolescents: Understanding and Nurturing Their Development*. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1978.

Seven articles which originally appeared in *Childhood Education* form a 36-page "collage of information regarding the nature and needs" of the young adolescent 10 to 15 years of age. Those who work with young teens are reminded by Lois Barclay Murphy of the qualities that make adults either mean top sergeants or understanding, communicative persons to early adolescents. Donald McNassor likens the transition from childhood to the adult world to a nighttime journey, during which young persons explore all kinds of uncertainties, until the daybreak of maturity. Authors Ron Tyrrell, Frank Johns, and Fred Hanoch McCarty say that youngsters who experience this phenomenal emotional, physical, and biological metamorphosis need adults who will create varied physical activities rather than restrict them.

Speaking to the current generation of parents as well as those he originally addressed in 1943, Fritz Redl presents survival guidelines which when seriously applied can contribute constructively to adolescent social and emotional development: "avoid counter-hysterics," "don't fight windmills," "provide a frame of life adequate for growth," and "watch out for preadolescent corns"—find out where they are and don't step on them.

Bamber, J.H. *The Fears of Adolescents*. New York and London: Academic Press, 1979.

This unusual study of fear by a Northern Irish psychologist encompasses scientific information on the fears of normal adolescents in "relation to the variables of sex, age, and type of [education] utilizing an American-made fear survey schedule." Clearly written material includes studies of fears and anxieties in general as well as specific adolescent fears.

Research data collected by the author in 1971-72 describe the age and sex differences in fears, the type and intensity of identified fears, and the relation of the effects of fear on personality. Although the structured self-completion questionnaire was given to 13- and 15-year-olds in 14 schools in Northern Ireland, the discussion and findings transcend geographic boundary lines because of the inclusion of other research studies from all parts of the world. The comprehensive reporting of other studies of fear gives the reader a broad view of the problems and contradictions in this important area of psychology.

Most fears of adolescents are based on childhood phenomena. Understanding what people are afraid of either through vicarious experience, imagination, or personal experience is important for all adults working with children and adolescents. For the person trying to identify ways of helping the "high risk" young adolescent understand normal fear, this book describes what many major studies have uncovered.

Brandt, David E. "Separation and Identity in Adolescence: Erikson and Mahler—Some Similarities," *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 13, No. 4 (1977), 507-518.

The author, a teacher at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, compares the young child's need for independence from the mother or caretaker with the Erikson studies on the adolescent's need for freedom from family control. The infant who learns physically to disassociate himself or herself from mother is similar to the adolescent who declares a "psychosocial moratorium." M.S. Mahler's studies on separation-individualization discuss the adolescent's need to be free from family, his/her identity crisis, and the stage where parents are recognized as persons. The article gives credence to the fact that humans are coping with the drives for separation from infancy through adolescence.

Coleman, John C. "Current Contradictions in Adolescent Theory," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 7, No. 1 (1978), 1-11.

Coleman explores his "focal" theory of adolescence, which proposes that adolescents survive the many stressful changes during this period of their development because they deal with one issue at a time and spread the adaptation over a period of years. Adolescents go through cycles of

minor stress—as is true of any age. The changes are no more stormy than at other stages of development.

Coleman, a British developmental and clinical psychologist, cites research studies which show that disturbances in middle childhood occur at about the same rate as in adolescence. This article gives the professional who works with young adolescents the hopeful message that if they try to help adolescents cope with one issue at a time and reduce simultaneous pressures, a more peaceful adolescent period may result.

Coleman, John C. *Relationships in Adolescence*. Boston: Routledge, 1974.

This study is designed to bridge the gap between empirical methods and everyday issues of adolescence, which this British developmental psychologist describes as a *process* rather than a *stage*. Developmental characteristics related to 1) solitude and self-image, 2) heterosexual relations, 3) parental relationships, and 4) friendship in large and small groups comprise the major part of the report. The work concludes with a well-documented and readable account of the focal theory of adolescent development, *i.e.*, that different issues come into focus at different times and that no two individuals cope with issues at the same chronological age or in the same sequence.

Conger, John Janeway. *Adolescence and Youth: Psychological Development in a Changing World*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1977.

This complete, readable, revised edition of Conger's first treatise on the subject covers almost every aspect of adolescent development mentioned by Feeney. The author approaches adolescence as it is affected by social institutions and contemporary conflicts. In a scholarly, well-organized style, Conger presents empirical research on basic issues such as independence, peer relationships, and sexuality. While the text covers the older adolescent in great detail, there is more than adequate material on the child who is becoming an adolescent.

The author compares the primary needs and consequent rewards satisfying to young children with those of young adolescents. Many fears, such as school phobia, occur in both young children and adolescents. Depression in adoles-

cents often stems from the fear of leaving childhood and its identity. Boredom and loneliness can attack both groups.

New references, new updated discussions, complete indexing, and current information on research make this book important to anyone interested in the development and status of today's young adolescents.

Elkin, Frederick, and Gerald Handel. *The Child and Society: The Process of Socialization*. 2nd ed. New York: Random House, 1972.

Understanding socialization—how the child becomes an adult functioning in society—is an integral part of learning how to know and help the adolescent. No one covers the subject more coherently than Elkin and Handel. Primarily helpful is Chapter Six, which explains the basic elements of adult socialization that are similar to the socialization of children. Language, reading, music, hero worship, playing games—all develop as socialization from childhood to adulthood. What children learn as social beings may set limits to what they accomplish in adulthood. By studying the child's growth into a social creature, the person who works with adolescents may be aware of patterns of socialization brought into adolescence and those which are uniquely brought about by adulthood.

Elkind, David. *Children and Adolescents: Interpretive Essays on Jean Piaget*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford, 1974.

A devotee and student of Piaget describes six basic concepts of the famed Swiss researcher: 1) conservation, 2) assimilation and accommodations, 3) equilibrium, 4) cognitive structures, 5) mental operations, and 6) schema. In a series of highly articulate, readable essays, he elaborates each concept with ample illustrative examples (often related as dialogue with children). For parents, teachers, and professionals who work with children and young adolescents, this is an excellent orientation to one of the major influences on current views of cognitive development. It is substantive enough for serious inquiry into Piagetian theory, but free of the statistical data that a scholar might seek. Elkind offers cogent answers to these questions: How do we provide meaningful answers to children's sometimes baffling questions? Why is it that children have such difficulty relating time within the framework of their experiences? How do

children acquire knowledge and information about themselves, by accrued age or along a particular developmental path?

Elkind, David. "Understanding the Young Adolescent," *Adolescence*, 13, No. 49 (1978), 127-134.

Young adolescents who have not yet fully achieved formal operational thinking often experience difficulty in assigning priorities and making appropriate choices among alternatives. For them there is a conflict between formulating general principles of behavior and the real difficulties of achieving ideals. These generalizations about the complexities of early adolescent behavior are based on the findings of Jean Piaget, and demonstrate the affective significance of intellectual processes.

Elkind shows that adults who understand Piaget's theory of intellectual maturity will recognize the early adolescent's "bad" or "stupid" behaviors as typical for this age group. Responsible adults will not ignore stupid or boorish behaviors, but will be able to deal with them rationally and without a sense of moral outrage. Until young persons are able to think about other people's thinking, the signal of Piaget's formal operations, they presume that everyone is as preoccupied with self-concern as they are. Elkind offers highly significant interpretations of Piaget's findings and specific ways in which these characteristics can be applied to early adolescent development.

Ellis, Eric H. "Some Problems in the Study of Adolescent Development," *Adolescence*, 14, No. 53 (1979), 101-109.

Ellis reviews research studies that apply models of childhood development to the understanding of adolescent development. The author challenges the assumption that studying pathological development leads to understanding of what transpires in normal adolescent development. Such application, he argues, underestimates the degree of strength, competence, and adaptability which the normal adolescent can muster.

Hoare, M.E. "Some Behavioral Consequences of Cognitive Development in Three Adolescent Counselling Cases," *Delta*, 19 (1976), 64-71.

Hoare takes a case-study approach to applying Piaget's theory of cognitive development and David Elkind's interpretation of that theory. He discusses the problems of adolescents who function at the concrete stage of thinking and reasoning. The egocentric adolescent who does not move into the formal stage but remains in the concrete stage appears to exhibit egocentric behavior characteristic of the young child. Adults working with the ego-identity-crisis problems manifested in adolescents need to be reminded of the same characteristics in children. Valuable reading for those working with problem cases.

Lefrancois, Guy R. *Adolescents*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1976.

Although the author defines adolescents as persons between ages 12 and 20, much of this popular-style psychology book is devoted to theories of child and early adolescent development. The discussions of intellectual development, memory, creativity, and intelligence based on Piaget's theories are helpful because they explain terms clearly and give many examples. The phases of adolescent development as described by Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Havighurst, and Gesell are clearly explained. At the end of each chapter the author lists main points to clarify the differences among theories. This book is remarkably up-to-date and material is attractively presented. Adolescents' writings and thoughts are quoted in the text.

Lipsitz, Joan Scheff. "Adolescent Development: Myths and Realities," *Children Today*, (September-October 1979), 3-7.

Society holds certain stereotypes about the nature of adolescence that the author enumerates and refutes. Adolescence must be viewed as a normal rather than a pathological condition of life. Teenagers are a widely variable rather than a homogeneous group, despite our tendency to lump them together as "they." When our society persists in regarding all adolescents as children, it is a disservice to the young people and to those who work with them. Equally disserving is the practice of ignoring the significance of social and emo-

tional questions that face adolescents, using the excuse that they will outgrow their problems in the future.

Socio-developmental tasks that characterize adolescence include individuation, separation, forming commitments, and outgrowing egocentrism. The shift from concrete to formal operational thinking accounts for why adolescents begin to question adult values. Despite the critical nature of this developmental period, there are few programs serving adolescents and only minimal dialogue about the age group.

Matteson, David R. *Adolescence Today: Sex Roles and the Search for Identity*. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1975.

The emphasis in this work is on sex role issues as the theme for adolescent identity formation, but its greatest value for readers of Feeney's work is in the presentations on body image and physical development, moral development, rebellion, and ego identity. The chapter on values uses Lawrence Kohlberg's identification of cognitive structure and levels of moral judgment to show the developmental progression from children's acceptance of their parents' values ("gods") to the formulation of their own values. Family and peer influences on children's values are described. As children develop into adolescents they are socialized and become aware of the values of others, but they may retain the values of their parents throughout late adolescence.

Medinnus, Gene R. and Ronald Johnson. *Child and Adolescent Psychology*. 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976.

An important guide to the psychology of the young child, the preadolescent, and the young adolescent, this clear and complete psychology text tells almost all a person needs to know about the forces that affect personality. Recent research findings along with well-illustrated chapters contain material on current socializing influences in school, church, mass media, and the community. The family influences, as well as heredity, learning, and motivation are described in connection with both the young child and the adolescent. Through the succinct and easily understood chapters, complete with good summaries and bibliographies, the reader sees the clear progression and relationships between the

growth and maturation of the preschooler and the adolescent. This is an accurate, timely, and significant coverage of young adolescent development.

Miller, John P. "Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erikson: Developmental Implications for Secondary Education," *Adolescence*, 13, No. 50 (1978), 237-50.

The works of three prominent researchers suggest the need to design educative and societal environments that promote the development of self-identity, formal reasoning, and moral autonomy in young adolescents. Miller describes and compares Piaget's formal operational thinking, Erikson's identity and self-definition concept, and Kohlberg's moral autonomy theories.

The adult professional who works with young adolescents needs to be sensitive to the indicators of developmental differences. Given appropriate conditions, young persons can move to the next developmental stage. This has implications for group work since members of a group should be at the same developmental stage in order to understand each other. The youngster who is still in Piaget's concrete operational stage will be confused and will be unable to develop the self-identity that Erikson has documented. The ability to make autonomous moral judgments, according to Kohlberg, is dependent upon cognitive and self-definitional developments. These researchers are in agreement that young adolescents need to be actively involved in situations that promote sequential development.

Smart, Mollie Stevens and Russell C. Smart. *Adolescents: Development and Relationships*. New York: Macmillan, 1973.

This is an attractively produced paperback on one stage of human development, the pubescent period, "a testing of all that has gone before." The volume provides a wealth of choice readings from well-known psychologists, packed with cogent information on five areas of maturation. The peer and parent relationships from childhood to adolescence are especially well covered, as are intellectual development and moral development. A final chapter on human life and growth brings the reader a fine overview of the changing relationships between the individual and the environment through all the processes of humanization. Short excerpts from the writings of Piaget, Erikson, and Frank give a taste

of the philosophy of these experts on child development. The book is fully illustrated with charts interpreting the research studies.

Sommer, Barbara Baker. *Puberty and Adolescence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

The book includes strong, well written chapters on cultural factors affecting 11- to 15-year-old adolescent growth. Identity and sex-role are covered, with research findings backing generalizations. Cognitive development is described clearly, accurately, and simply. Much important and reliable information on puberty is included.

U.S. President's Science Advisory Committee. Panel on Youth. *Youth: Transition to Adulthood*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974.

This report is clustered around 1) background, 2) issues, and 3) alternatives for the ways young persons are brought into adulthood in the United States. The historical perspective of age groupings, youth rights, and demographic, economic, educational problems provided a broad background against which the Panel dealt with issues such as segregation *vs.* integration of youth with adults, patterns of self-development and productive activity, and the status/rights concern. The pros and cons of extending the scope of formal schooling *vs.* reducing it in order to build in socializing activities through work experience in the community are given. The report concludes with directions for change which suggest that alternating school and work be considered, that youth might be incorporated in work organizations, and that "protection" of youth can be responsible for isolating them from adults and adult responsibilities. Areas of needed research are identified. Those who are concerned with early adolescent development will still find the issues of this six-year-old report significant, as they seek to assist young adolescents with their transitions to later adolescence and adulthood.

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